



Administrative Regulation

Political Activities

Policy #	03-07.10
Effective Date:	August 10, 2020
Revision Date:	August 23, 2021
Owner:	Human Resources

Purpose:

To clarify the permissible scope of political activity by a City of Springfield employees in their role as public employees.

Scope:

This regulation applies to all employees, volunteers, appointed officials such as Planning Commissioners and members of other City Council committees.

Policy:

As a public employer, the City recognizes that employees have the right to be involved in regular citizen activities. City Employees are free to engage in political activity on their own time. Employees cannot however promote or oppose a political position while they are on the job during work hours. There are strict expectations and laws regulating political activity in the workplace.

City employees shall not solicit any money, influence, service or other things of value or otherwise promote or oppose any political committee, the nomination or election of a candidate, the gathering of signatures on an initiative, referendum or recall petition, the adoption of a measure or the recall of a public office holder while on the job during working hours or while wearing City provided clothing or uniforms.

An elected official, non-elected official public employee or any other person shall not require, coerce or direct City employees to engage in any political activity, regardless of whether the activity itself would be lawful or unlawful.

Federal laws also include prohibitions affecting City employees in federally aided programs.

Procedure:

1. Political Activity

- 1.1 Oregon law prohibits the use of public funds, equipment, and supplies to advocate for or against a ballot measure or candidate and restricts what public employees may do in support of or in opposition to a ballot measure or candidate. It is also inappropriate to use City resources, or equipment (including vehicles, computers, cell phones, printers,

internet services and uniforms) for political activity even if an employee is on their own time (i.e, at lunch).

- 1.2. While on the job during working hours or while wearing City provided clothing or uniforms, City employees may not promote or oppose the nomination or election of a candidate, the adoption of a measure or the recall of a public office holder.
- 1.3. City employees shall not engage in political activity by soliciting money, influence, service, or anything of value in this regarding during working hours or while wearing City provided clothing or uniforms.
- 1.4. City employees may as part of their job duties prepare and provide neutral and objective information about the expected effect of City ballot measures.
- 1.5. City employees cannot give a speech or presentation advocating a political position if they are on the job or acting in their official capacity or wearing City provided clothing or uniforms.
- 1.6. City employees may attend meetings at which political issues are discussed, so long as they do not engage in political activity themselves while on the job or acting in their official capacity.
- 1.7. City employees wish to engage in advocacy with respect to a ballot measure or candidate during their work hours, they must request leave in advance and obtain authorization to take vacation/PTO for that period of time.
 - 1.7.1. Exempt employees must be able to verify that their time was flexed or coded appropriately (ie. Vacation/PTO) for any political activity conduct during their working hours.

2. Campaign Buttons

- 2.2. Wearing buttons is allowed if it is an expression of a personal opinion. On or off the job, public employees may wear buttons that are intended and viewed as personal expression of their political views. However, since citizens might identify a personal expression as an official one, discretion is advised in such situations.
- 2.3. Special restrictions may apply to employees who wear City uniforms while on the job. Employees shall comply with department specific work rules regarding uniforms.

3. Display of Political Materials

- 3.2. Employees are not allowed to wear attire (hats, shirts, etc.) that contain political advocacy in the workplace or violate their department's uniform policy.

3.3. Personal political paraphernalia, such as posters, mugs, etc., will be allowed in the workplace, but discretion must be used. If an item starts to become a distraction in the workplace, or creates disruption, the City may prohibit all such items from the workplace. Personal and political items will not be in the public's view.

4. Distribution of Political Materials

4.1 Employees shall not distribute material (physical or electronic) that contains political advocacy while on duty.

4.2. Employees shall not use break rooms, employee lounges, reception areas or other areas to “drop off” political advertisements or documents about a candidate, ballot measure or other political issue that contains political advocacy.

4.3. As part of their job duties, employees may process and distribute incoming mail addressed to specific employees that contains political advocacy.

Definitions

1. Political Activity- an activity directed toward supporting or opposing federal, state or local measures, candidates, recalls, political committees, or petitions.

Resources:

1. [Restrictions on Political Campaigning by Public Employees – ORS 260.432](#)
2. [Local Employee Federal Hatch Act Information](#)
3. [City of Springfield Appearance and Dress Administrative Regulation](#)

CREATION (Original):

This administrative regulation is in effect as of the date of my signature. I authorize the Human Resource Director to modify the history and resources sections and header, footer, and numbering without my reauthorization. The administrative regulation remains in effect should these revisions occur.			
Approved By:	Nancy Newton, City Manager	Dates:	8/5/2020
Author:	Chaim Hertz, Director of Human Resources		
Responsible Party:	Human Resources		
Replaces:	Personnel Management Memo 11 (dated August 14, 1986)		

PERIODIC REVIEW:

Reviewer:	Chaim Hertz, Director of Human Resources	Date:	1/30/2021
Reviewer:		Date:	
Reviewer:		Date:	
Reviewer:		Date:	
Reviewer:		Date:	

REVISIONS:

Version #2:	Responsible Party:	Human Resources		
	Revised By:	Chaim Hertz, Director of Human Resources		
	Approved By:	Nancy Newton, City Manager	Date:	8/17/21
	Reason/Summary of Changes:	Adds language clarity under sections “Political Activity” & “Campaign Buttons” and a new subsection was added titled “Display of Political Material” and a		